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SUBJECT: CCS SHIOZAKI-DUSD LAWLESS ON DPRI IMPLEMENTATION,
COLLECTIVE SELF-DEFENSE

1.(S) SUMMARY: Chief Cabinet Secretary Shiozaki told visiting Deputy Under Secretary for Defense Lawless over dinner December 3 that:

-- Japan needs more specifics from the U.S. before setting a date to submit a bill to the Diet early next year to fund the move of Marines to Guam.

-- a 2 2 meeting in mid-January would help smooth Diet passage of realignment legislation;

-- "consultations" on realignment with the new conservative Okinawa Governor will begin once he takes office December 10, but Japan stands by its agreed commitments;

-- Prime Minister Abe is "very serious" about reexamining constraints on collective self-defense. Discreet bilateral discussion on the issue could continue at the policy level as part of consultations on alliance roles, missions and capabilities. END SUMMARY.

12. (S) In a dinner meeting with visiting Deputy Under Secretary for Defense Richard Lawless December 3, Chief

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Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki outlined Japanese government views on legislation implementing the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) agreement, a possible 2 2 meeting in January, dealing with the new Okinawa Governor, and collective self-defense.

DPRI legislation

13. (C) Shiozaki outlined Japanese government plans to submit two bills on funding DPRI realignments to the Diet session running from January-June 2007. A bill providing economic incentives to affected base communities is largely finalized, and should go to the Diet by late February, he said. Legislation to permit funding of the planned transfer of Marines from Okinawa to Guam using Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) money could not go forward, he said, until Japan received more concrete detail on U.S. plans for the move. Further details will be essential in order to secure Diet approval, said Shiozaki, and to fend off challenges from the opposition. DUSD Lawless replied that the U.S. side should be able to provide the detail Japan needed by mid-to-late December. So long as the government can provide "sufficient explanation" of DPRI funding in the coming Diet session, said Shiozaki, the issue should be resolved well before the Upper House election in July 2007.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: Shiozaki's comments on how the Cabinet Office will manage the submission of the necessary legislation (one legislative action or two) reflects the lack of consensus as to how that legislation will be packaged, rather than any reluctance to get on with the necessary approvals of funding.

In separate conversations, several Japanese government officials more involved in the details of the legislative strategy appear confident that a single, integrated bill will be internally coordinated and submitted for Diet approval during the February-March timeframe. END COMMENT.

¶5. (C) Holding a 2 2 meeting in mid-January that included reference to realignment would be helpful in smoothing Diet passage of DPRI funding legislation, said Shiozaki.

New Okinawa Governor

¶6. (C) The election of conservative candidate Nakaima as Governor of Okinawa was a great relief, said Shiozaki. Many within the LDP had expected defeat, he said, noting he had been chided by ruling party Upper House Chairman Aoki to "pay more attention to Okinawa." The central government planned "consultations" with the new governor, to be held in Tokyo soon after he takes office December 10.

¶7. (C) DUSD Lawless urged that the focus of talks with Nakaima be on implementation of the realignment package already agreed by both governments; "pulling the thread" on any single element (especially the replacement of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma) risked unraveling the whole deal. Shiozaki agreed, emphasizing that Japan stands by its commitments contained in the October 2005 2 2 Alliance Transformation Agreement.

¶8. (C) MOFA Director-General for North American Affairs Kawai noted that Futenma relocation must take place first, before any transfer of Marines to Guam. Nakaima's public comments during the campaign may have sounded critical of the realignment plan, he said, but his actual position was far more understanding. He seemed like a practical politician who the government could work with, along the lines of arrangements made with the Yokosuka Mayor regarding the forward deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

Diet Member visits to Guam

¶9. (C) On pending requests by some Diet Members to Guam, Shiozaki stated that any delegation should be "headed by the LDP", and certainly not composed only of opposition politicians. A group led, for example, by the LDP's Ishiba and opposition Democratic Party of Japan "shadow defense minister" Nagashima, should avoid unhelpful grand-standing, suggested Kawai.

¶10. (C) Lawless advised that a Diet trip include visits not only to sites planned for future construction under DPRI, but also to U.S. naval and air facilities, to showcase their vital role in guarding against regional contingencies. Kawai added that, even among some conservative Diet Members, there was a common misperception that the move of Marines to Guam was only a plan to strengthen capabilities on the island, rather than a balanced approach, which includes an effort to reduce the burden on Okinawa. It would be useful to clear up this mischaracterization, he suggested.

Collective Self-Defense

¶11. (S) Prime Minister Abe is "very keen" and "very serious" about reassessing Japan's interpretation of its constitutional constraints on collective self-defense, said Shiozaki, adding that the subject is politically sensitive in Japan. "We have a good sense of our future course" within the Cabinet, he said, reflected in agreement between President Bush and Prime Minister at their summit in Hanoi to expedite BMD cooperation on BMD, including on operational

issues. Shiozaki acknowledged differences between his own recent comments on collective self-defense and those of Defense Minister Kyuma. Kyuma had been thinking of the technical limits of a "PAC-3 based system" when he had asserted recently that it would be "impossible" for Japan to attempt to intercept a U.S.-bound missile, explained Shiozaki.

¶12. (S) Collective self-defense is one of the most crucial issues in the alliance going forward, said DUSD Lawless. Operationally, it was a very real issue for U.S. forces, given that U.S. bases in Guam and Okinawa were likely already within range -- and targeted by -- North Korean missiles. The U.S. and Japan urgently needed to rectify the current situation, said Lawless, whereby both countries were fielding BMD capabilities but could not yet operate them together. Any impediments to data-sharing between U.S. and Japanese Aegis, for example, had to be resolved quickly. Progress in this area would send a strong, positive message to other countries in the region, he added. Addressing the subject at an upcoming 2 2 statement in a classified annex was an option if desired.

¶13. (S) Kawai said progress could be made through an assessment of concrete, realistic cases in which Japan might face a choice on collective self-defense. This discussion could occur bilaterally in policy-level discussions on contingency planning through the DPRI process. Japan needed to have a "realistic" discussion on collective self-defense based on credible situations, he stressed, not an "abstract, theoretical" legal debate. "If we can explain this issue to the Japanese people realistically" based on the need to respond to real-world dangers, said Kawai, they will understand the need for a new approach in certain cases.

Afghanistan: Japan's role

¶14. (C) Completing Japan's portion of the Khandahar-Herat ring road is a high priority, said Shiozaki, referring to discussion of the subject between Prime Minister Abe and President Bush in Hanoi. He noted that a new round of bidding would be held this week on the contract for the remaining Japanese-funded portion of the road. The U.S. Embassy had been helpful in providing names of potential contractors for the project, he added.

¶15. (C) Referencing Foreign Minister Aso's November 30 speech on Japan's desire to promote an "arc of freedom and prosperity", Lawless asked if there was anything more that Japan could do to support NATO efforts in Afghanistan. Shiozaki said that NATO had recently approached Japan about participation in Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan. Although sending Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to take part in a PRT was probably "too difficult" at this point, he said, "there must be something" Japan could do to "find a way around institutional barriers" and go beyond its present contributions.

Abe to Europe

¶16. (C) Prime Minister Abe will travel to Europe in early January, noted Shiozaki, and was likely to visit NATO. His stops would include the UK, France, and Germany as well as probably NATO and EU headquarters in Brussels. Exact dates had not been set, but Abe would need to be back in Tokyo before January 17.

¶17. (U) DUSD Lawless cleared this message.
SCHIEFFER